

Central Place Design Guidelines

Central Place Historic District



Kirkwood Landmarks Commission

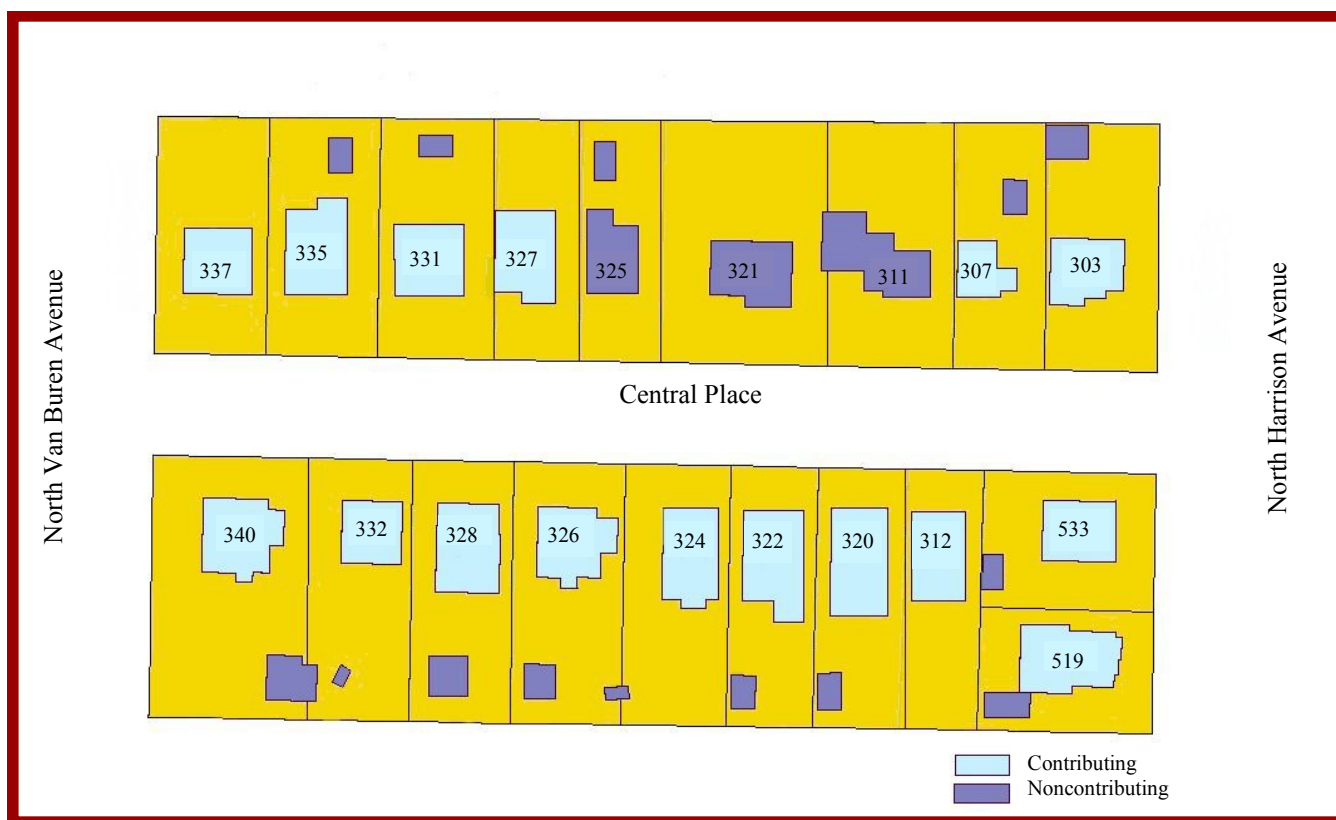
Date: June 2004

Purpose of the Guidelines

These design guidelines are intended to promote a district that will have a clear identity and sense of place while providing a pleasant environment for all. They offer direction to property owners, designers and city officials as to key architectural design components of Central Place. The guidelines have been produced and adopted by the Kirkwood Landmarks Commission in June of 2004 specifically for the Central Place Historic District, but may be used by owners of other Bungalow style homes in Kirkwood.

All exterior improvements to homes in the Central Place Historic District are subject to review by the Landmarks Commission before a building permit can be issued.

Central Place Historic District Map



The Central Place Historic District is located just north of the 1853 original square mile boundaries of Kirkwood. It consists of 17 homes in the 300 block of Central Place and two homes facing N. Harrison Avenue. Bungalow style homes predominate on the block and all but three have maintained their original character from the 1920s. The City designated the area a local historic district in 1998.

Bungalow Design Guidelines

Central Place Historic District

History

During the first quarter of the 20th Century, homeowners felt they had found the perfect small house --- The Bungalow. Traditionally, a bungalow is a small, long, one- or one-and-one-half story house with a low pitched roof, overhanging eaves, and a prominent front porch. These small homes were built with a simplicity of style, using sound construction techniques and included the newly available modern conveniences. All of this at an affordable price. Bungalows appealed to those of the middle and working classes seeking first-time ownership. Bungalows, generally, exhibit a wide range of decorative styles: Craftsman, Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial, Tudor and Pueblo, being most common.

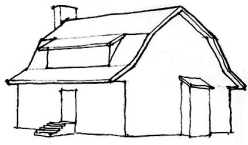


The prevalence of the Bungalow style house in Kirkwood attests to its popularity. The Bungalow style as a suburban residential type became popular in Kirkwood in the 1910s and 1920s. It was a form suited to the suburban setting of modest lots with front and side yards typical of Kirkwood's original development. The quality of the craftsmanship and attention to detail, particularly in the interiors, is significant. The natural qualities of the building materials were of great importance. Brick was often left unpainted and stucco, if painted, was often in natural tones: tan, ochre or gray. Wooden elements were usually stained dark or allowed to weather. These homes symbolized the prosperity of the country, and the availability of the "American Dream." These homes were indicative of the new 20th Century suburb, both affordable and accessible, due to the advent and popular usage of streetcars, automobiles and buses. In Kirkwood, the most common style is Craftsman or Prairie, but other examples can be found.

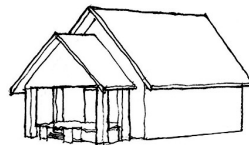
The Central Place Historic District was designated locally in 1998. The historic district includes the most concentrated examples of Bungalow style homes in the city that have not substantially changed from the original homes built between 1913 and 1924. Nineteen structures make up the historic district, including two houses that face North Harrison (519 and 533 North Harrison). They were built on small lots, the result of a pattern of subdivision and re-subdivision of larger properties which accommodated the great increase in population in Kirkwood by the 1920s. (Leffingwell's First Addition to Kirkwood, 1866, and Maple Park, 1890, were the original subdivision and a later re-subdivision, respectively.) The location of these lots, just outside the comfortable walking distance of the original town, may be due to the introduction of the use of the streetcar and the automobile in Kirkwood. The Central Place homes feature Craftsman and Prairie stylistic details. Three roof configurations are common to the type: side and front gables, side gambrels and low pyramidal roofs. The most characteristic feature of the Bungalow besides its roof with overhanging eaves, exposed rafter ends, decorative elbow brackets and dormers, is the front porch. The homes in the district have full or partial-width, projecting or recessed porches.

Roofs

House Types



Gambrel roof - shed dormer



Gable roof - front gable porch



Double slope side gable - gable dormer



Side gable - hip dormer

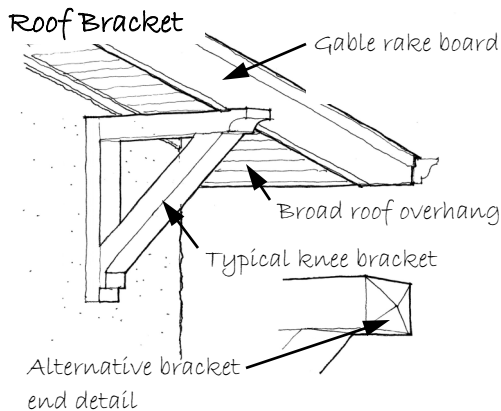
The roof is a distinguishing feature of a historic structure, helping to define its architectural character and the buildings overall form. The interplay of roof forms, materials and details helps give the historic district its unique character. The most common roof form in the district is gable, but complex roofs mixing gable, hip, gambrel and other roof shapes are also found. Roofs may feature bracketed eaves, open rafters, rafter tails and generous overhangs. The most widely used roofing material is composition shingles of asphalt in a variety of patterns.

Recommended

- Retaining and preserving original roof form, pitch and significant features such as dormers, decorative rafter tails or soffit boards. If replacement of a roof detail is necessary, the new detail should match the original.
- Replacing or repairing the roof with asphalt shingles matching the original color and pattern.
- Replacing or repairing metal gutters and downspouts as needed using a matching profile.

Not Recommended

- Using rolled roofing.
- Covering the decorative features of overhangs with vinyl soffits and trim.
- Adding or increasing dormers to the front façade which adversely impact on the building and surrounding streetscape.



Porches and Entryways



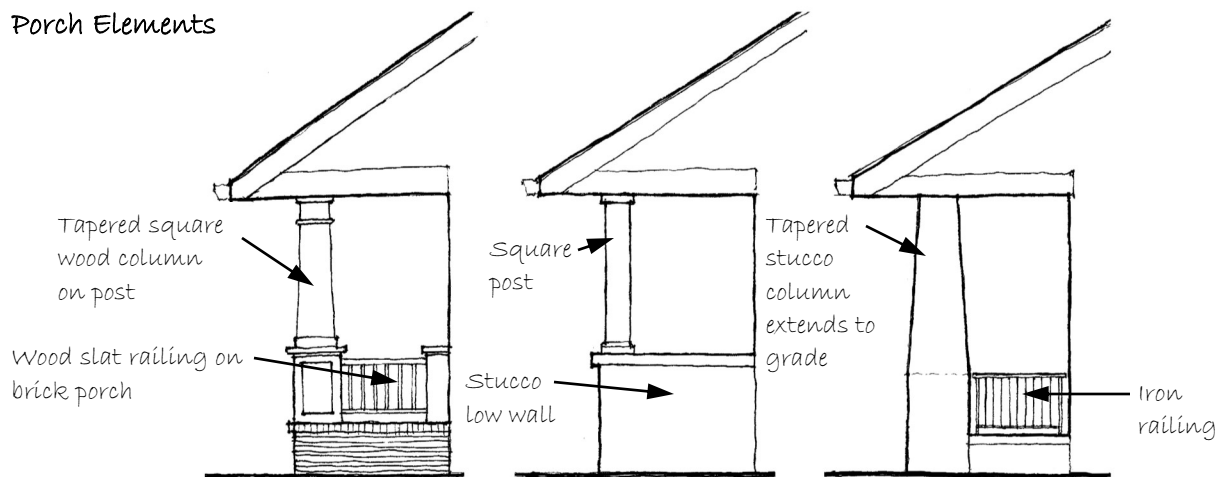
Porches are one of the most distinguishing features of the Craftsman Bungalow style. In addition to presenting a welcoming face to the street, the porch was seen as an outdoor room where the family could be closer to nature and visit with their neighbors. Spatially defined by low walls or balustrades and sheltered by extending the slope of the roof, most porches are full or half width. Since main floors are raised above grade a few feet, porches are accessed by a series of steps from the front walk which helps to emphasize the entry.

The roof structure is supported by prominent, stout wood or stucco columns which may sit on solid piers. Some columns have slightly slanted vertical surfaces and many appear fatter than necessary; yet, this characteristic is a hallmark of the style.

Recommended

- Constructing piers and solid low walls of materials that match the original house.
- Constructing open balustrades of simple square wood pickets, without elaborate turning profiles.
- Replacing or repairing damaged concrete steps, pier caps and copings with similar materials.

Porch Elements



Not Recommended

- Adding porches that are not integrated with the original house and have a tacked on appearance.
- Replacing wood balusters with painted aluminum or vinyl railings.
- Replacing original light fixtures with new fixtures uncharacteristic of the period.

Doors & Windows



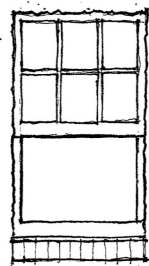
Front doors were considered to be an important feature of the entryway and were thoughtfully conceived and constructed to demonstrate the skill of the carpenter craftsmen. Wood stile and rail frames with slightly recessed flat wood panels and some glass is most common.

Windows are mostly double hung with glass light sash patterns of three over one, six over one and some six over six. In several cases, sunrooms and enclosed porches have casement style windows with Craftsman style muntin patterns.

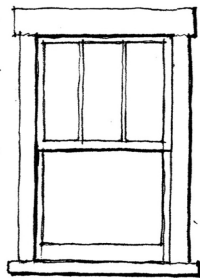
Recommended

- Installing screen or storm doors with thin profile wood or metal frames should be compatible in size, shape and color to existing openings.
- Using decorative art glass panes with simple geometric patterns inspired by Craftsman style designs.
- Replacing windows to match existing types, opening sizes, sash frame widths and muntin patterns as closely as possible.

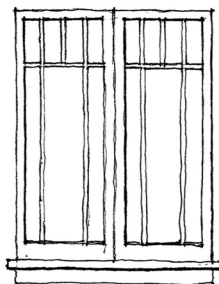
Window Types



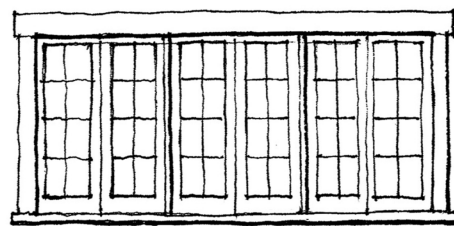
Double hung
(six over one)



Double hung with casing
(three over one)



Casement with prairie
style muntin pattern



Ganged casements with casings

Not Recommended

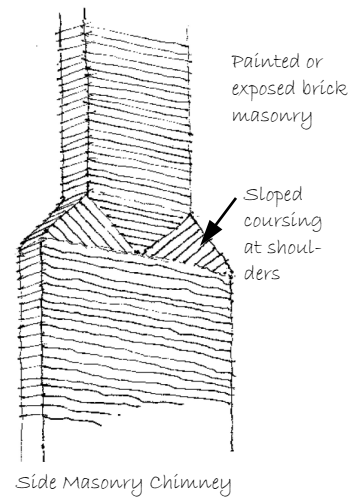
- Replacing original doors with flush surface wood or metal doors and Colonial style doors.
- Adding window shutters where none originally existed.
- Painting wood trim and sashes with highly saturated, multiple shades of bright pigment. Original paint colors were selected to complement the natural surroundings.

Chimneys, Foundations and Other Masonry/Stone

Many of the homes in the Central Place Historic District have painted brick chimneys as a significant architectural feature. The common foundation material used was locally available limestone or brick. Proper maintenance of chimneys, foundations and other masonry/stone surfaces may include re-laying any loose brick or stone, careful re-pointing deteriorated mortar joints and proper replacement of metal flashing where the chimney meets the roof or wall. Techniques such as sand blasting and high pressure washing erodes the brick exterior causing moisture to get inside, and water proof coatings such as a silicone-based sealant will actually trap moisture inside. These techniques should be avoided.

Recommended

- Cleaning masonry surfaces with the gentlest method possible, such as low pressure (garden hose) water and detergents, using natural bristle brushes.
- Removing only damaged or deteriorated paint on masonry surfaces to the next sound layer using the gentlest method possible (e.g., hand scraping) prior to repainting.
- Applying compatible paint coating systems with colors that are historically appropriate to the building and district.
- Re-pointing mortar joints where there is evidence of deterioration such as disintegrating mortar, cracks in mortar joints or loose bricks.
- Removing deteriorated mortar by carefully hand-raking the joints to avoid damaging the masonry.
- Duplicating old mortar joints in width and in joint profile.
- Allowing for proper ventilation in foundations, as covering vents can trap moisture and lead to deterioration.



Not Recommended

- Applying paint or other coating systems to masonry that has been historically unpainted.
- Removing paint from historically painted masonry.
- Using high pressure water or sandblasting brick or stone surfaces using dry or wet grit abrasives. These methods of cleaning permanently erode the surface of the material and accelerate deterioration.
- Removing non-deteriorated mortar from sound joints, then re-pointing the entire masonry surface to achieve a uniform appearance.
- Shortening or removing original chimneys when they become deteriorated

Stucco

The predominant exterior material used in the district is stucco; a term traditionally used to describe exterior plastering. Stucco originally consisted primarily of hydrated or slaked lime, water and sand, with straw or animal hair used as a binder. After about 1900, most stucco was composed primarily of Portland cement, mixed with some lime. With the addition of Portland cement, stucco became versatile and durable when applied over wood or metal lath attached to a light wood frame, or directly, without lath, to masonry substrates such as brick or stone. If it is applied over a wood frame structure, stucco may be applied to metal lath nailed directly to the wood frame; it may also be placed on lath that has been attached to furring strips. The furring strips are themselves laid over building paper covering a wood sheathing. When stuccoing over a stone or brick substrate, it is customary to cut back or rake out the mortar joints to provide the necessary bond for the stucco to remain attached to the masonry.

Stucco is traditionally applied in multiple-layer process consisting of a first “scratch” coat, followed by a second “brown” coat, followed finally by the “finishing” coat. Many of the stucco homes in Central Place have been painted over the years.

Most stucco deterioration is the result of water infiltration into the building structure, either through the roof, around chimneys, window and door openings or excessive ground water penetrating through, or splashing up from the foundation. Ground settlement is also a potential cause of deterioration.

Recommended

- Identifying and repairing the cause of stucco deterioration before repairing the stucco.
- Repairing small hairline cracks with a thin slurry coat consisting of the finish coat ingredients, or even with a coat of paint or whitewash.
- Using the skill and expertise of a professional plasterer when doing stucco repairs.
- Patching rather than wholesale replacement is preferable. The new stucco should duplicate the old in strength, composition, color and texture.
- Maintaining or repainting with products that are compatible with any coating already on the surface of the stucco. In preparation for repainting, all loose or peeling paint not firmly adhered to the stucco should be removed by hand-scraping or natural bristle brushes. The surface should then be cleaned.

Not Recommended

- Repairing small hairline cracks with caulking compounds. Because their consistency and texture is unlike that of stucco, they tend to weather differently and attract more dirt, making the repair highly visible and unsightly.
- Removing sound stucco or repairing with new stucco that is stronger than the historic material or does not convey the same visual appearance.
- Using very strong color contrast and excessive highlighting of small details.
- Using a substitute material for the replacement part that does not convey the visual appearance of the surviving stucco or that is physically or chemically incompatible.

Dormers

Due to the low building height typical of Bungalow style residences, dormers satisfied the functional need to increase ceiling clearance at upper floors and to admit natural light through dormer windows. Shed, gable and hip dormer roofs are most common.



Recommended

- Adding dormers that match existing roof overhangs, slopes, prevailing roof type and bracket details (if applicable).
- Adding dormers at least a few feet away from existing roof edges to preserve visual clarity of the main roof form.

Not Recommended

- Adding dormers with excessively long shed roofs.

Garages

None of the original garages have survive intact in the historic district. The earliest garages were simple frame structures with no floor, which could accommodate a single automobile and little else. Gradually, they became more substantial structures, often matching the architecture of the house. These original garages can provide models for new accessory structures and garages.

Recommended

- Retaining the original materials and features of historic garages and outbuildings including windows, doors, siding and trim. If replacement of an element is necessary, match the original in design.
- Locating new garages and accessory buildings in rear yards and not past the centerline of the house.
- Limiting the size and scale of garages and accessory buildings so that the integrity of the original structure or size of the existing lot is not compromised or significantly diminished.

Not Recommended

- Utilizing prefabricated wooden accessory structures that are not compatible with the principal structure or with original garages such as modern gambrel style roofed structures.
- Utilizing prefabricated metal accessory structures.

Landscaping

Typical features of this historic district are grassy front lawns with substantial plantings, shade trees, ground covers, hedges and other border plantings. The goal was to create the effect that the house was solidly planted to the ground.

Recommended

- Retaining mature trees that contribute to the character of the historic district.
 - Using front landscaping which will not conceal the architectural features of the house.
 - Maintaining the property's natural topography and avoid grading that adversely affects drainage, soil stability and existing trees.
 - Using natural fencing materials that is open and lower in scale.
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Not Recommended

- Using chain link fencing or decorative planter borders, such as plastic fencing, which are not appropriate for the period of the house.
 - Landscaping that conceals the architectural features of the home.
 - Replacing of front lawn areas with crushed stone, pea gravel or brick chips for ground cover.
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Additions

New additions should be designed and constructed so that the character-defining features of the original bungalow are not radically changed. These features should not be replicated in the addition, but the design should relate to the existing structure by scale, material and general character. Consideration should be given to streetscape impacts of infill construction and additions.

Recommended

- Siting additions away from principal elevations.
- Designing new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.
- Making additions compatible with the architectural character of the principal building and its surroundings.

Not Recommended

- Using the same wall plane, roof line, siding lap or window type to make additions appear to be part of the historic building.
- Designing a new addition so that its size and scale in relation to the historic building are out of proportion, thus diminishing the historic character.
- Removing significant landscaping features and mature plantings.



References

Grimmer, Anne E, *The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco*, Preservation Briefs 22, Washington, D.C., National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1990.

Design Guidelines, The Historic Chicago Bungalow Initiative, 2003, <http://www.chicagobungalow.org/design.html>.

Building Exterior Masonry, Standards and Guidelines, Washington, D.C., National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1990.



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